

**Idaho Fish and Game Commission
Quarterly Meeting November 13-15, 2007
Sandpoint, Idaho**

November 13, 2007

Commissioners Tony McDermott, Fred Trevey, Wayne Wright, Randy Budge, Cameron Wheeler, and Gary Power participated in a tour of the Chimney Complex Fire at Craig Mountain.

Executive Session

The Executive Session convened at 7:45 p.m. at the Clearwater Regional office in Lewiston, Idaho. Commissioners Tony McDermott, Fred Trevey, Wayne Wright, Randy Budge, Cameron Wheeler, Gary Power and Director Cal Groen were present. Commissioner Bob Barowsky was excused.

07-87 Commissioner McDermott moved and Commissioner Wright seconded a motion TO HOLD AN EXECUTIVE SESSION, PURSUANT TO IDAHO CODE 67-2345(1)(C) PERTAINING TO PERSONNEL. The motion carried in a unanimous vote.

07-88 Commissioner Budge moved and Commissioner Power seconded a motion TO COME OUT OF EXECUTIVE SESSION. The motion carried in a unanimous vote.

The meeting ended at 10:45 p.m. with no official action taken.

November 14, 2007

Commissioners Tony McDermott, Fred Trevey, Wayne Wright, Randy Budge, Cameron Wheeler, and Gary Power participated in a tour of the shooting range at Farragut State Park

MISCELLANEOUS

Public Meeting

Chairman Wheeler called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. Commissioners Tony McDermott, Fred Trevey, Wayne Wright, Randy Budge and Gary Power were present. Commissioner Bob Barowsky was excused.

Chairman Wheeler noted that the Commission takes the public comment seriously and the Commission will review the public comments at the general meeting on November 15, 2007.

Harvey Richman, Attorney, representing CARE, a group of local citizens opposing the changes at Farragut Shooting Range. Mr. Richman referenced the court order, shooting tubes at the range, 500 shooting day limit, the noise at the range and 55 DBA.

Duane Nightingale, Engineer, representing CARE spoke regarding acoustical standards for Farragut shooting range.

Grant Simonds, Executive Director, Idaho Outfitters and Guides Association (IOGA) spoke regarding the Selway Zone and non-resident deer tag set aside; and presented the Commission with IOGA's recommendations.

Larry Keister spoke regarding the Department proposal to open the Moyie River to year round fishing.

Elmer Hamilton representing himself had concerns on when the last elk herd count was taken in Unit 29; wolves in the area; and depredation hunts. He would like to see the number of permits lowered. He suggested a late season for archery hunters who did not harvest in the early season in the Salmon Region.

Jim Hagedorn spoke regarding hunters who come to the Clearwater Region to hunt elk and the problem with wolves in the area. He distributed papers to the Commission on wolf attacks on humans.

Larry Book, representing Bonner County Sportsmen, welcomed the Commission to North Idaho. He noted the good working relationship with the Department and the Bonner County Sportsmen.

Mr. Book noted that he is also representing the Idaho Sportsmen's Caucus Advisory Council (ISCAC) and would like the record to reflect that Bonner County Sportsmen supports the Farragut Shooting Range. ISCAC is against high fenced hunting and game farms. Mr. Book commented on the wolf population and how the moose population will be effected.

Michael Branson, representing Wind River Outfitters commented on outfitting in the Selway Zone and the decrease of elk due to wolves. He stated that tag reduction is not the issue; calf survival rate is the issue that should be addressed.

Carl Thomas Zmuda is in support of keeping the Farragut Shooting range open to the public.

Kraige Clark spoke regarding the kokanee population on Lake Pend Oreille. He would like to see the Department take control of all of the predators on the lake both large and small mouth bass.

Milt Thompson asked for information on Lake Pend Oreille netting.

Nate Helm, representing Sportsmen for Fish and Wildlife (SFW) referenced a letter distributed to Commissioners addressing Randy Smith, IDFG and his work with SFW on the Statewide Mule Deer management Plan. SFW appreciates the willingness of Department staff to answer questions. Mr. Helm commented on the management of wolves.

Walt Tracinski stated that he lives near the Farragut Shooting Range and is in favor of the range staying open. He commented that he does not hear shooting from the range when he is in his house.

Ed Lindahl, Sagle submitted a letter of comment to the Commission regarding the funding for the non-game program; hunting seasons and management of wolves.

Adjournment

The Commission meeting adjourned at 8:00 p.m.

November 15

The Commission meeting convened at 8:00 a.m. with Commissioners Wheeler, McDermott, Trevey, Wright, Budge, and Power present. Commissioner Barowsky was excused.

MISCELLANEOUS

Agenda Changes

Two items were added to the agenda, a presentation of the Outstanding Steward of America's Waters award, and a change to current turkey season to clarify the number of turkeys for Units 1, 2, 3 and 5 will be added to agenda #15.

Review of Public Comment

The Chairman noted that the predominant theme of the public hearing was wolf management, Farragut Shooting Range, concern with the elk numbers in Unit 29, and regional comments on bass as a predator. Staff will address the question regarding netting on Lake Pend Oreille. Director Groen thanked Bonner County Sportsmen for the use of their meeting room.

Director's Report

Director Groen referenced highlights from Director Reports found in the Commission agenda book:

- Good cash position
 - The Department's cash position continues its recent trend of exceeding expectations with a balance of \$9.1 million as of October 19th
- FY 2009 budget was submitted on time to DFM
 - Overall increase in our budget was nearly all due to expanded federal programs
- License/tag sales continue to build the Department's cash position
- Fleet vehicles reduced by 16 % and working well
- Fish and Game webpage is the Communication Bureau's top priority
 - 214,000 hits per month
- Volunteers to help collect sagebrush seed
 - Good press coverage
- Staff working on improvements to hunter education curriculum
 - Online hunter & bow classes
- Newly developed pilot Trapper Ed Course
- Trout in the Classroom Program
- Volunteer Mentored Angler program
- Wildlife Express
 - Teachers buy subscription
- Educating people about bears in Region 6
- IDFG INFO receives 40-50 emails per day
- Wildlife DNA Lab has expanded
- South Fork Salmon River Enforcement
 - Violations down from 22% in 2001 to a low of 5% in 2007
- \$3.5 million dollar (BPA) expansion at Eagle Hatchery
- Region 5 Office Expansion Spring Summer 2008
 - Project funded through the Permanent Building Fund
- US vs Oregon progress being made on court settlement
- Spring and Summer Chinook trapping and spawning season is now completed
 - 3,908 adult Chinook
 - 5,849 jack salmon (one ocean males)
 - Indicates a strong 4 year old Chinook run for 2008
- Bureau of Wildlife did a great job of supporting Murphy Complex Fire
- Mule Deer Initiative seeing results on the ground
- Turkey Harvest for the spring season was 4,080 turkeys for 2007 spring season
 - Overall harvest rate was 28 %
- Conservation Data Center nongame program is working on funding and grant issues

Commission Reports

Panhandle Region: Commissioner Mc Dermott reported on the following:

- Continue to make headway on predator reduction at Lake Pend Oreille
- Harborview marina problem was addressed with clean-up of the site, which was completed last week

- Successful general and archery elk season in the Panhandle, based on check station results
- Muzzleloader season changed to short range weapon season
 - Number of muzzleloaders through check station are up 15 %
 - One year remedy 4-7-9 short range weapon season
- A nuisance male grizzly bear put down this fall in the Priest Lake area

Magic Valley Region: Commissioner Wright reported on the following:

- Fire season most severe in recorded history for Southern Idaho
 - Approximately 1 million acres burned within the Magic Valley Region
 - Partners in effort to restore burned lands to provide fish and wildlife habitat
- Randy Smith, Regional Wildlife Manager working on the Statewide Mule Deer Management Plan
- Mule Deer Initiative work continues despite the fire rehabilitation efforts
- Plans to inter-seed shrubs and forbs on roughly 1,200 acres of private property
- Upland bird hunting has been dismal this fall

Salmon Region: Commissioner Power reported on the following:

- Reports that hunting seasons have been very good
- On going problems with Greenfield hunts in Pahsimeroi and the number of elk
- Enforcement is busy in the Region
- Youth Pheasant hunt successful last weekend
 - Volunteer effort is tremendous
- Reconnects of streams in the Region to connect to the Lemhi and Salmon rivers
 - Working with landowners
 - OSC involved in specific marine funding for reconnects
 - Great boost for fisheries
- Attended Wolf Policy Group meeting in Lewiston with Commissioner Trevey
 - Tribes and County Commissioners, OSC and Fish and Game participating
 - Discussion of overall management of wolves

Clearwater Region: Commissioner Trevey reported on the following:

- In the orientation process as a new Commissioner
- Dedication of Fish and Game employees to the Department and interest of constituents on what the Department does
- Preserving Wildlife for the future generation, children and grandchildren
- Capture of bighorn sheep for radio collaring
- Discovery of grizzly bear in the Region
- Travel Plan working with Nez Perce, Forest Service and the Department
- Fire in the Billy Creek WMA area
 - Efforts to rehabilitate the area
- Clearwater Mentored Youth Program
 - Pilot Program
 - 15 mentors

- 10 landowners participating
- Deer Creek Reservoir is recovered and is a good water for family fishing

Southeast Region: Commissioner Budge reported on the following:

- Pleasure to work with the Department and fellow Commissioners
- Fisheries in Region has suffered due to no water
- Reported good deer hunting success for Southeast
- Turkey population growing
- Mule Deer Initiative moving along well
- Mule Deer Workshop in August
 - 100 people in attendance
 - Greater opportunity for input
- Sharptail hunting down
- Good success for Grouse hunting
- Access Yes Program going well
 - Working on Additional Acreage at Georgetown WMA
- Work continues on the pelican problem at Blackfoot Reservoir
- Work continues to develop a public fishing pond in Pocatello
- The Region is working on the Forest Service Travel Plan
 - Progress in educating sportsmen on the plan

Upper Snake Region: Commissioner Wheeler reported on the following:

- Water conditions affecting the Upper Snake Region
 - Facing water issues similar to Regions 4 and 5
- Welcomed new Commissioner Trevey
- Ad Hoc Funding Committee meeting December 6 in Boise
 - Look at funding sources and different approaches
- Record Brown Trout Record 27.3 lbs caught at Ashton Reservoir
- Chester Hydro Project completed
 - Staff did a good job
 - Positive for Fisheries
- Kudos to Director and Regional Staff in preparation for the Commission meeting

Consent Calendar

07-89 Commissioner Power moved and Commissioner McDermott seconded a motion TO APPROVE THE FINANCIAL REPORT AS PRESENTED IN THE CONSENT CALENDAR. The motion carried in a unanimous vote.

REPORTS

Bonneville Cutthroat Plan

Scott Grunder, Fishery Program Coordinator, briefed the Commission on the Management Plan for conservation of Bonneville Cutthroat Trout in Idaho (Appendix 40, Exhibit 75).

Mr. Grunder noted that due to a variety of factors, Bonneville cutthroat trout have declined in abundance across their historical range in the western United States. In Idaho, Bonneville cutthroat trout occupy 63% of their historical range, all within the Bear River drainage. The Fisheries Bureau and the U.S. Forest Service (Caribou-Targhee National Forest) have cooperated in developing a Management Plan for Conservation of Bonneville Cutthroat Trout in Idaho. Since the Forest Service administers a significant percentage of important habitat for this subspecies, it is advantageous to have a joint management plan. This plan summarizes historical and current information on Bonneville cutthroat trout in Idaho, and it describes their status with respect to abundance, trends, genetics, and an evaluation of land and water management effects on the subspecies. We present joint management strategies and conservation actions to increase the persistence of Bonneville cutthroat trout in the Bear River drainage. The Commission previously was notified of the Department's intent to solicit public comment on a Draft Plan. This presentation provided an overview of the agency and public comments received on the management plan and the Department's disposition of those comments. The Fisheries Bureau seeks Commission approval of the Bonneville cutthroat trout management plan.

07-90 Commissioner Budge moved and Commissioner Mc Dermott seconded a motion TO ACCEPT THE DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATION TO ADOPT THE MANAGEMENT PLAN FOR CONSERVATION OF BONNEVILLE CUTTHROAT TROUT IN IDAHO AS AN OFFICIAL DEPARTMENT SPECIES MANAGEMENT PLAN. The motion carried in a unanimous vote.

MISCELLANEOUS

Chairman Wheeler welcomed Senator Joyce Broadsword who was in attendance.

RULES

Rules: Fishing 2008-2009

Steve Yundt, Chief, Fisheries Bureau noted that the Department considered regulation complexity, angler retention and recruitment when scoping proposals for 2008-2009.

Bill Horton, State Fisheries Manager, presented the Department's fishing rule proposals for 2008-2009 (Appendix 40, Exhibit 76).

Mr. Horton noted that every two years, the Fisheries Bureau and Regions review current and proposed fishing rules and make recommendations to the Director's Office for changes. The Department then presents these to the Fish and Game Commission for rule making. Both biological and social issues are considered in developing and maintaining or modifying of fishing rules.

Each Regional Fishery Manager takes comments from the public regarding fishing rules during the previous two years. Additionally, during the spring 2007 each region notified the public through news releases that they are holding open houses, public meetings, and/or are accepting comments in any form to discuss current and proposed fishing rules and to accept suggestions for rule changes from the public. Following Commission approval on these general concepts (July 2007), the proposed rules were presented to the public and agencies for specific rule modifications. Additional input is also sought. These comments have been reviewed by the Department and used to develop specific rule proposals for consideration by the Commission at the November meeting. Department guidelines for taking public input are followed.

07-91 Commissioner Power moved and Commissioner McDermott seconded a motion TO ACCEPT THE PROPOSED FISH RULE CHANGES FOR 2008-2009 FISHING SEASONS. The motion carried in a unanimous vote.

Ratification of Rules Adopted by the Commission

Dallas Burkhalter, Deputy Attorney General, presented the temporary and proposed rules adopted by the Commission.

As part of the rulemaking process under the Idaho Administrative Procedures Act (IDAPA), the Commission needs to adopt as Pending Rules those Temporary/Proposed Rules previously promulgated during the last rulemaking year. We have referred to this process as 'ratification' because the Commission is formally approving rules which it has already promulgated. This approval is needed for the rules to be reviewed by the 2008 Legislature. If the Pending Rules are accepted by the legislature, the rules will become Final Rules.

The IDAPA provision for adopting Pending Rules and the legislative review process is Idaho Code Section 67-5224. There are not policy issues. This is an annual step in the rulemaking process.

07-92 Commissioner Budge moved and Commissioner Wright seconded a motion TO ADOPT THE FOLLOWING PROPOSED RULES AS PENDING RULES:

- 1) IDAPA 13.01.04 Rules Governing Licensing, Docket No. 13-0104-0701

- 2) IDAPA 13.01.08 Rules Governing the Taking of Big Game Animals, Docket No. 13-0108-0701
- 3) IDAPA 13.01.09 Rules Governing the Taking of Game Birds, Docket No. 13-0109-0701
- 4) IDAPA 13.01.12 Rules Governing Commercial Fishing, Docket No. 13-0112-0701
- 5) IDAPA 13.01.17 Rules Governing the Use of Bait for Taking Big Game Animals, Docket No. 13-0117-0501

The motion carried in a unanimous vote.

Mr. Burkhalter noted that the Magic Valley Pilot Project was pulled and will not go on for review per Commission direction.

Rules: Nonresident Deer and Elk Tag Quotas

Brad Compton, Wildlife Game Manager, presented the Department's recommendation (Appendix 40, Exhibit 77) for nonresident deer and elk tags.

07-93 Commissioner McDermott and Commissioner Wright seconded a motion TO ACCEPT THE DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATION FOR NONRESIDENT DEER AND ELK TAG QUOTAS AS PRESENTED BY STAFF.

Nonresident Deer & Elk Tag Total Quotas

Tag Type	Current	Proposed
Total Elk (All Zones)	12,815	12,815
Regular Deer*	12,800	14,000
Southeast Deer	1,200	Eliminate quota
White-tailed Deer**	0	1,500
Total Deer	14,000	15,500

* Regular tags include Regular & White-tailed deer tags.

** Proposed additional quota, only to be used upon sell out of regular deer*.

The motion carried in a unanimous vote.

Rules: Nonresident Deer and Elk Tag Outfitter Set-Aside

Brad Compton, Wildlife Game Manager, presented the Department proposals for nonresident deer and elk tag Outfitter Set-Aside (Appendix 40, Exhibit 77).

07-94 Commissioner Power moved and Commissioner McDermott seconded a motion TO ACCEPT THE NONRESIDENT DEER AND ELK TAG OUTFITTER SET-ASIDE QUOTAS AS PRESENTED BY STAFF.

Nonresident Deer & Elk Tag Outfitter Set-Aside Quotas

Tag Type	Total NR Quota	Current Outfitter Set-Aside	Proposed Outfitter Set-Aside
Total Elk (All Zones)	12,815	2,400	2,400
Regular Deer*	12,800	1,900	1,985
Southeast Deer	1,200	85	Eliminate quota
White-tailed Deer**	1,500	0	0
Total Deer	15,500	1,985	1,985

* Regular tags include Regular & White-tailed deer tags.

** Proposed additional quota, only to be used upon sell out of regular deer*.

The motion carried in a unanimous vote.

Elk Tag Caps and Outfitter Allocation

Brad Compton, presented the Department recommendation for elk tag caps and allocation (Appendix 40, Exhibit 77). Mr. Compton noted that the Commission establishes quotas for nonresident deer and elk tags prior to nonresident licenses and tags going on sale December 1. Additionally, the Commission establishes quotas for outfitter set-aside tags. Outfitter set-aside tags are a subset of total nonresident tags, and not in addition to.

Limited elk zone tag quotas are typically set in March; however any changes to zone tag quotas needs to be in effect prior to the sale of nonresident elk tags. The Department anticipates no changes to the current elk zone quotas, with possible exception of the Selway Zone.

A population survey conducted during January 2007 indicates the wintering population in Units 16A, 17, 19, and 20 (Selway Zone) continues to decline with reductions primarily occurring in the cow and calf segments of the population. Bull numbers remain stable from the previous surveys in 2001 and 2004. Population models predict that current male calf recruitment is not high enough to offset current bull harvest.

Conversely, other information suggests the Selway elk population is meeting hunter's expectations. The Selway Zone receives the highest demand from nonresident hunters as evidenced by tags being sold out within a few hours. Elk hunters in the Selway Zone enjoy among the highest general season success rates observed in Idaho. Additionally, total bull harvest and the number of 6 point bulls harvested have increased over the past 8 years. Because of the remote nature of the Selway Zone, numerous outfitters operate within the zone and a high percentage of hunters are nonresident.

Elk Tag Caps & Allocation

07-95 Commissioner Trevey moved and Commissioner McDermott seconded a motion TO ACCEPT THE ELK TAG CAPS AND ALLOCATIONS AS

PRESENTED FOCUSED ON OPTION 2 IN THE SELWAY B TAG WITH THE CAVEAT THAT UPON THE NEXT AERIAL COUNTS THE DEPARTMENT WILL REVISIT THIS ACTION.

Zone/Tag Type	Total Tags	Resident Tags	Nonoutfitted Nonresident Tags	Outfitter Allocation
Lolo 'B' Tags	1,600	1,008	356	236
Selway 'B' Tags	1,255	565	334	356
Middle Fork 'A' Tags	1,551	1,168	174	209
Middle Fork 'B' Tags	1,636	925	267	444
Elk City 'B' Tags	1,790	1,414	326	50
Dworshak 'B' Tags	2,380	2,118	215	47
Proposed Changes				
Selway 'A' Tags	645	179	254	212
Selway 'B' Tags (Option 1*)	1,130	509	301	320
Selway 'B' Tags (Option 2*)	1,067	480	284	303

* Options include the following recommendations in March 2008:

Option 1 – 'A' tag Oct 1 – Oct 31; 'B' tag Sep 15 – Sep 30

Option 2 – 'A' tag Oct 1 – Oct 31; 'B' tag Sep 15 – Sep 30, Nov 1 – Nov 11

The motion carried in a unanimous vote.

REPORT

Lake Pend Oreille Update

Ned Horner, Regional Fisheries Manager, presented an update to the Commission on Lake Pend Oreille (Appendix 40, Exhibit 78).

Mr. Horner reported that historically, Lake Pend Oreille supported more angler days than any other water body in Idaho, with a fishery based on kokanee, trophy rainbow trout, and trophy bull trout (including world records for both rainbow and bull trout); fishing effort has declined substantially with the decline of kokanee. The declining kokanee population in Lake Pend Oreille has been a concern since the 1980s. Declines could initially be attributed to lake level management (Corps of Engineers operation of Albeni Falls dam on the lake outlet) affecting kokanee spawning habitat. Lake level issues have been addressed, but since the late 1990s populations of kokanee predators (lake trout, rainbow trout, bull trout) have increased, and survival of older age kokanee has declined precipitously. In 2000, the harvest fishery for kokanee was discontinued, and aggressive measures to control predator numbers were initiated.

Idaho Fish and Game is responsible for management of the Lake Pend Oreille fishery, although bull trout are currently listed under the ESA. Two major mitigation programs

are in place to offset the impacts of the downstream Albeni Falls Dam (BPA mitigation) and the upstream Avista Corp. hydroelectric projects (Avista mitigation). Both programs contribute significantly to fishery restoration efforts on the lake.

Since spring of 2006 the Lake Pend Oreille Fishery Recovery Task Force has been meeting regularly. The Task Force consists of citizens representing different aspects of the angling community, and serves as a “think tank” and sounding board for the Department, and has contributed substantially to the management actions currently in place on the lake. In addition, IDFG holds an annual “State of the Lake” meeting each winter, and newsletters go out bi-annually to participants in the Angler Incentive Program. Presentations are periodically made at club and other meetings. Funding for Avista mitigation projects is the result of projects going through review by the 27 stakeholder signatories to the Clark Fork Settlement Agreement, which establishes the mitigation program for the Clark Fork Hydroelectric projects.

LEGISLATION

2008 Legislative Update

Sharon Kiefer, Intergovernmental Policy Coordinator, reviewed the Commission legislative process used during the 2007 legislative session including Commission conference calls and the legislative analysis process to gain Commission guidance for the upcoming 2008 session. Ms. Kiefer noted that the legislative session will convene January 7, 2008.

Commission consensus is to continue the process used for the 2007 session; and to hold a weekly conference call on Thursday of each week, commencing on January 24 at 8:00 a.m. through the 2008 legislative session.

Ms. Kiefer briefed the Commission on the Department legislative proposals for the 2008 session (Appendix 40, Exhibit 79).

Ms. Kiefer noted the December 6, 2007 Legislative Ad Hoc Committee meeting.

REPORT

Idaho Fish and Wildlife Foundation Report

On behalf of Gayle Valentine, Executive Director, Sharon Kiefer briefed the Commission on Idaho Fish and Wildlife (IFWF) activities.

- IFWF Land Matrix draft will be ready for IFWF Land Committee review at December 2007 meeting
 - Document will help determine stewardship fees for proposed conservation easements/land donations throughout Idaho
- IFWF Finance Committee establishing 2008 IFWF budget
- IFWF Investment Committee working on investment policy
- Next board meeting December 8th – Boise IDFG Headquarters. Bob Barowsky has been invited to join Dr. Wayne Wright from the Commission
- Lower Rock Creek easement finalized near Inkom, Idaho. The easement donors have given total of 750 acres to IFWF
- Currently working on two proposed conservation easements in Wood River Valley
- IDFG Engineering Bureau and IDFG Region 5 office are in final stages of a proposal to ITD to repair an eroded stretch of the Portneuf River within the Edson Fichter Nature Area
 - The project has \$17,000 available funds for the project with \$8,000 left for O&M in perpetuity
- Staff is working on increasing number of trips for late winter/early spring 2008 Online Auction

LANDS

Land Acquisitions

Gregg Servheen, Wildlife Program Coordinator, briefed the Commission on the following land acquisition projects and asked for Commission approval for the Department to move forward with closure purchase of these properties. Mr. Servheen noted that all of the land items have been presented to the Commission in executive session.

Mr. Servheen would like to remove the Highland Valley Smith Property from the list for approval at this time. He indicated that the property is not ready for Commission approval at this time.

R1-Pend Oreille WMA lot (Wilson) – The 0.74-acre lot is located adjacent to the Lower Pack River Habitat Segment, part of the Pend Oreille Combined Lands Wildlife Management Area, and is being purchased for \$45,000 under the Albeni Falls wildlife mitigation program. Acquisition of the subject property will allow the Department to petition the County assessor's office to abandon and relocate the platted road and utility accesses through the middle of the Habitat Segment. This will contribute to the long-term plan of providing a safe movement corridor for wildlife moving along the Pack River as well as improved management of the WMA. Executive Session: March 2007.

R2-Redbird Access (Coleman) – Acquire 0.5 acres of pasture land (\$4,750) in the Nez Perce County adjacent to the newly acquired 2,862-acre Redbird parcel. Acquisition of this parcel would provide improved recreational and administrative access into the southeast segment of the Redbird property on Craig Mountain WMA. This access point will allow for development of a public parking area, improve sportsman's access, and reduce conflicts with private landowners. Executive Session: March 2007.

R3 -Highland Valley Smith Property – Acquire 66.54 acre life estate for \$177,000 on property located about ½ mile from the Boise River WMA headquarters providing valley bottom and shrub-steppe mule deer winter range. The owner, Mr. Larry Smith, previously sold a portion of the property containing springs and significant wetlands to RMEF (transferred to BLM) that is now part of the WMA. Water from the springs is used to irrigate a few acres of pasture and there is a strip of riparian vegetation. Living trust would allow son to remain on property for life with some public access and land management operations specified in the Trust. Executive Session: July 2007.

R3 –Solterbeck Colwell – - In 1960 the Department purchased an access easement from Rosa Solterbeck. This easement was for access to the Payette River. Currently the access to the Payette River at Solterbeck is now permitted by the City of Payette on the north side. Colwell Ranches has acquired the property that the easement is now on. Colwell Ranches would like to exchange the easement for a 19 acre parcel on the Payette River upstream with unimproved boat ramp. Executive Session: January 2006

R5-Thompson - This 160-acre fee title acquisition for approximately \$160,000 lies just across the Union Pacific RR line from the 86 acres recently purchased from McCammons and borders our Georgetown WMA in Bear Lake County 4 miles northwest of Georgetown. The property would also come with a BLM lease of 28 acres that borders approximately 3/8 mi of the Bear River. This property is part of an important travel corridor for wildlife, particularly elk, traversing from the Bear River Range (Management Unit 75) and the Aspen Range (Management Unit 76). This area, including the Georgetown Summit WMA, is the highest elevation habitat (excluding the actual river corridor) connecting the two ranges. Lands to the east and west tend to be developed for agriculture and rather open in character. Executive Session: July 2007

R4 - Centennial Addition – Acquire fee title to 1,461 acres for \$2,045,000 at Centennial Marsh WMA as part of the Southern Idaho mitigation program funded by BPA. The properties are owned by 3 landowners, one of which desires to do a value for value exchange of his 280 acre property for 700 acres we purchase from another. The acquisition of these properties will enhance wildlife habitat, administration, and access on the Centennial Marsh WMA and provide connectivity between three existing parcels of IDFG owned lands and help reduce management challenges related to livestock operations on the subject properties. Acquisition would also allow improvement of the water delivery system throughout the marsh when conditions require supplemental water pumping to maintain water levels during critical brood rearing periods. Executive Session: July 2007

07-96 Commissioner Mc Dermott moved and Commissioner Power seconded a motion TO ACCEPT THE LANDS COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS AND TO PROCEED WITH THE ACQUISITIONS AS BRIEFED WITH THE EXCEPTION OF THE HIGHLAND VALLEY SMITH PROPERTY. The motion carried in a unanimous vote.

MISCELLANEOUS

Commission Meeting Calendar

The Commission set the following dates for the 2008 meetings: January 16, 17, 18 in Boise; March 5, 6, 7 in Boise; May 21, 22, 23 in Twin Falls, July 23, 24, 25 in Coeur d'Alene; August conference call (date to be determined); and November 5, 6, 7 in Lewiston.

Outstanding Steward of America's Water Award

Chip Corsi, Regional Supervisor introduced Mr. Tim Swant, Project Manager for AVISTA. Mr. Corsi noted that Mr. Swant is in charge of implementation of the protection migration enhancement programs that were an outcome of the Cabinet Gorge hydroelectric project re-licensing on the Clark Fork. Mr. Swant noted that each year the Hydro Industry provides the highest environmental award each year in the form of the Outstanding Steward of America's Water. The project submitted was the Predator Management on Lake Pend Oreille. Mr. Swant presented the award to the Commission.

MISCELLANEOUS

Appointment Commission Representative to WAFWA

07-97 Commissioner Wright moved and Commissioner Power seconded a motion THAT COMMISSIONER TONY MCDERMOTT WILL CONTINUE AS THE REPRESENTATIVE OF THE COMMISSION TO WAFWA. The motion carried in a unanimous vote.

Director Groen encouraged all members of the Commission to attend future WAFWA meetings.

RULES

Bag Limit for Fall Turkey Hunting 2007

Mr. Gould referenced Commission actions at the May 2007 (Appendix 40, Exhibit 80) which modified fall hunting seasons in the Panhandle region to address depredation issues. The bag limit was increased to 5 birds of any type during the fall hunt. The daily bag limit was not adjusted at that time. The Department recommendation is to increase the daily bag limit in “Special Tag Units” to 5 any turkey during the fall season in Units 1, 2, 3, and 5. Mr. Gould noted that a one-page handout will be distributed to vendors, regional offices and posted on the Department Website notifying hunters of this daily bag limit change.

07- 98 Commissioner McDermott moved and Commissioner Power seconded a motion THAT THE COMMISSION CHANGE THE TURKEY DAILY BAG LIMITS IN UNITS 1, 2, 3, AND 5 FROM ONE TURKEY TO FIVE TURKEYS DURING THE FALL SEASON, EFFECTIVE NOVEMBER 15, 2007. The motion carried in a unanimous vote.

REPORT

Upland Bird Season Report

Jeff Gould provided a report on Upland Game Season proposals for 2008/9 -2009/10 (Appendix 40, Exhibit 80). The Department will seek public comments on the following proposals and will present the Department recommendations at the January 2008 meeting.

Furbearer Seasons:

- Increase otter harvest quotas in Magic Valley and Upper Snake regions
- Close beaver trapping on Willow Creek drainage in Units 66 and 69
- Increase beaver trapping opportunity in Southeast and Magic Valley regions

Turkey:

- Increase controlled hunt tags
- Harvest 2 birds prior to May 1st
- Expand general season youth hunt to include April 12-14

WMA Pheasant Hunting:

- Explore options to expand youth only opportunities on WMA's Area or time designations
- Hunter orange quantified

WMA Pheasant Stocking Program

Jeff Gould, Wildlife Game Manager, provided a follow up report to the Commission (Appendix 40, Exhibit 80). Items covered in the report were the cost, benefits, how much is spent on habitat and what is the path forward for the pheasant stocking program. Mr. Gould stated that the 5-year average cost of the stocking program including personnel for (2002-2006) was \$193,500.

Mule Deer Plan

Brad Compton, Wildlife Game Manager provided an update to the Commission on the draft Idaho Mule Deer Management Plan (Appendix 40, Exhibit 81).

Mr. Compton noted that the species management plans provide overall direction to the Department, and functionally represent “action plans” referenced in the Department strategic plan (*The Compass*). Species management plans do not have statutory or administrative rule authority, but do represent Commission policy and provide guidance to the Department on developing administrative rule recommendations.

In 2006 the Department began revising the State Mule Deer Management Plan. Central to this revision was a statewide mule deer hunter survey conducted by the University of Idaho. Results from the public survey were used to draft proposed statewide direction for mule deer management. Incorporating input from regional public meetings (‘sounding boards’), the Department has developed a draft for Commission review prior to soliciting input from a broader public.

A draft copy of the plan was sent to each Commissioner prior to the November meeting (Appendix 40, Exhibit 82). Mr. Compton provided a revised draft (Appendix 40, Exhibit 83) and an executive summary of the mule deer plan (Appendix 40, Exhibit 84).

The statewide mule deer hunter survey provided the initial opportunity for public involvement. Additionally, the Department has hosted several regional meetings (‘sounding boards’) to solicit feedback for preparation of the draft management plan. The Department also hosted a Mule Deer Workshop in Pocatello, with many of the comments used to shape the draft plan. Upon release to the general public, the Department will solicit input via regional meetings and the department web site.

Staff recommends the Commission approve releasing the draft mule deer management plan for general public review and comment. Staff will prepare a final draft ready for Commission adoption at the January 2008 meeting.

Mr. Compton noted that the plan will be available for public comment on the Department website, and that Regional Fish and Game offices will be hosting public meetings to

discuss the plan and gather public comments. The comment period will end December 31, 2007.

The Commission concurred for the Department to proceed with releasing the draft mule deer management plan out for general public review and comment.

Wolf Population Management Plan

Steve Nadeau, Large Carnivore Program Manager updated the Commission on the Idaho Wolf Population Management Plan (Appendix 40, Exhibit 85). Commissioners were provided a copy of the draft plan and a copy of Governor's Otter's letter regarding the Idaho Wolf Population Management Plan (Appendix 40, Exhibit 86).

Mr. Nadeau stated that the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service has recently indicated the desire to publish a delisting rule on wolves by the end of February 2008. The Department has been planning what wolf management as a big game animal will look like and how we will proceed in planning regulated wolf harvest. With assistance from a stakeholder group, a working draft Wolf Population Management Plan (Plan) was developed. The working draft plan was delivered to the commission, the stakeholder group, OSC, and the Nez Perce Tribe. A stakeholder group and public survey helped develop the Plan.

The level of management planning and implementation has increased over the last few years, and will continue to do so. The transition to state management has been ongoing since 2002 and the Department is now prepared to take over management of wolves as a big game animal and to plan Idaho's wolf harvest strategies.

Mr. Nadeau noted that the draft plan development has been 1 year in process and was Commission directed. Plan Goals are as follows:

- Manage for a self-sustaining, viable population
- Manage wolves as native resident wildlife
- Manage wolves to minimize conflict
- Maintain >15 breeding pairs
- Ensure interchange with adjacent populations
- Establish a strong and balanced public education program

Commission consensus is for the Department to proceed with releasing the draft Idaho Wolf Population Management Plan for 2008-2012 for public review. The plan will be available for comment on the Department website, open houses will be held at regional offices through out the state for public review and comment. The public comment period will close December 31, 2007.

Mr. Nadeau noted that comments will be analyzed and edits made to the plan January 1 through February 29. The plan will be presented for Commission approval at the March 5-7, 2008 meeting in Boise.

Farragut Range Update

Chip Corsi, Regional Supervisor, provided a brief report on Farragut Range and long-term management of the lands at Farragut. Mr. Corsi stated that the Department does not believe the court ruling has closed the door on the range. The two main issues of concern are the noise and the shooting days. The Department's goal is to provide a high quality family oriented range that meets the needs of sportsmen; meets the need for recruiting new hunters; and law enforcement training. The Department is currently partners with Idaho Parks and Recreation in the management of the range access. The Department desires to maintain this long-term partnership. There is potential for long term for transfer (at fair market value) of Idaho Department of Fish and Game ownership of the Farragut WMA to the Idaho Parks and Recreation, allowing other things to be done for wildlife with funds generated by such a transfer.

07-99 Commissioner McDermott moved and Commissioner Budge seconded a motion as follows: (1) THAT THE COMMISSION DIRECT THE IDAHO FISH AND GAME DEPARTMENT TO PURSUE A FULL PARTNERSHIP ARRANGEMENT WITH IDAHO PARKS AND RECREATION DEPARTMENT TO DEVELOP, OPERATE AND MAINTAIN A COMMUNITY, FAMILY AND SPORTSMEN BASED SHOOTING RANGE AT FARRAGUT STATE PARK; AND (2) THAT THE COMMISSION DIRECTS IDAHO FISH AND GAME DEPARTMENT TO WORK TO FACILITATE THE TRANSFER OF THE IDAHO FISH AND GAME FARRAGUT WMA TO THE IDAHO PARKS AND RECREATION DEPARTMENT. THIS TRANSFER WILL BE DONE FOR FAIR CONSIDERATION WITH THE PROCEEDS TO BE PAID TO THE IDAHO FISH AND GAME DEPARTMENT LAND LEGACY TRUST FUND TO BE REPOSITIONED IN OTHER PROPERTIES THAT BETTER MEET THE IDAHO FISH AND GAME DEPARTMENT MISSIONS AND PROVIDE FOR A MORE EFFICIENT AND CONSOLIDATED OPERATION OF FARRAGUT STATE PARK. (3) THAT ANY PROPOSALS DEVELOPED BY THE DEPARTMENT RELATING TO THESE MATTERS BE PRESENTED TO THE COMMISSION FOR FINAL APPROVAL. The motion carried in a unanimous vote.

MISCELLANEOUS

Election of Commission Chairman

07-100 Commissioner Wright moved and Commissioner McDermott seconded a motion TO RE-ELECT CAMERON WHEELER AS THE COMMISSION CHAIRMAN. The motion carried in a unanimous vote.

07-101 Commissioner McDermott moved and Commissioner Power seconded a motion TO REAPPOINT WAYNE WRIGHT AS THE VICE CHAIRMAN. The motion carried in a unanimous vote.

Executive Session

07- 102 Commissioner McDermott moved and Commissioner Power seconded a motion to hold an executive session, PURSUANT TO IDAHO CODE 67-2345(1)(C) TO DISCUSS LAND ACQUISITION . The motion carried in a unanimous vote.

07- 103 Commissioner Wright moved and Commissioner McDermott seconded a motion TO COME OUT OF EXECUTIVE SESSION. The motion carried in a unanimous vote.

The session ended at 4:00 p.m. with no official action taken.

Cameron Wheeler
Chairman

Cal Groen
Secretary